

Tools for Transitioning from Student to Entry-Level Practitioner

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AOTA/NBCOT National Student Conclave
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Introduction

We've brought together some experts and asked our new practitioner members for their perspective and advice to you.

- What is the primary issue for new practitioners?

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So What Can You Do?

- **Now**
 - Make the most of your education
 - Choose your fieldwork sites wisely
 - Establish strong relationships with practitioners
 - Begin the process of life-long learning
 - Create a professional portfolio
- **Future**
 - Develop a professional statement
 - Interview your potential employer
 - Choose wisely
 - Use your support network and resources
 - Continue the process of life-long learning

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Creating a Professional Portfolio

- Continuing education
- Leadership opportunities
- Advanced education/certifications
- Evaluation tools
- Licensure info
- Presentations
- Publications



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Creating a Professional Portfolio (con't)

- Role played in outside surveys (e.g. CARF, JCAHO, State inspections)
- Fieldwork Supervision
- Research Interest/Pursuits
- Programs developed
- Special projects
- Volunteer experiences – both professional and community

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Making the Most of your Fieldwork Experience

- Ask lots of questions
- Try new treatment approaches
- Ask for rationale
- Improve documentation skills
- Access evidence-based research
- Utilize AOTA Resources



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Making the Most of Your Fieldwork Experience

- Know your strengths/weaknesses
- Know your learning style
- Learn to accept criticism and learn from it
- Be confident in yourself
- Set goals for yourself
- Access AOTA resources from Web site <http://www.aota.org/Educate/EdRes/Fieldwork.aspx>

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What Will You Learn?



- New approaches
- Clinical versus textbook application
- Time management
- Opportunity to learn from all disciplines
- Enhanced knowledge base
- Experience working with family members

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Professional Statement

- Summarizes the purpose for becoming an occupational therapist/occupational therapy assistant
- Guide for job search and placement
- A point of reference when creating professional development goals
- Promotes life long learning


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Professional Statement

I want to educate older adults on how to age successfully by teaching self-management skills, encouraging active participation in the community, and promoting a healthy balance of daily activities.

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The Search Begins



- Develop your professional statement
- Interview, interview, interview
- Know your priorities
- Talk to people
- Be aware of your fears

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What Does the Potential Employer Have to Offer?

- Supervision
- Mentoring
- Commitment to clinical excellence
- Commitment to professional development
- Salary and Benefits

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What Does an Entry-Level Practitioner Have to Offer?

- Holistic treatment
- Enthusiasm and creativity
- Innovative approaches
- New knowledge
 - Research
 - *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process*
- Evidence-based Practice




Professional Responsibilities of an Entry-Level Practitioner


- Licensure
- AOTA Membership
- NBCOT Standards
- State Association Membership
- CEU Requirements for Licensure
- Standards of Clinical Excellence
- Professional Development Goals



Developing Your Own Standards of Clinical Excellence





- Professional Statement on Resume
- Grad School Tool Box
- Theory
- Research
- *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework*
- Standardized Assessments
- Professional Development Tool
- Identifying Your Resources
- Professional Portfolio



Challenges of an Entry-Level Practitioner


- Confidence in Skills
- Striking a Balance
- Employer Expectations
- Knowledge Gap
- Generational Differences



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Professional Development Goals

- **Measurable**
 - I will organize and present at least 2 continuing education seminars for my colleagues.
- **Balanced**
 - Job specific tasks
 - Self directed learning tasks





The Stressors of Moving into the Workforce

- Time management
- Moving from learning intern to learning OT
- Resistance to bringing evidence-based practice into the workplace
- Feeling like I have so much to learn
- Overall lack of confidence




The Highlights of Moving into the workforce

- Actually do OT
- Beginning to build my life
- Being part of the team
- Continuing to learn
- Paycheck !



Know Your Resources


- **AOTA**
 - OTConnections
 - Publications: OT Practice/AJOT/SIS Quarterlies
 - Conferences
 - Continuing Education Offerings
 - Professional Development Tool
 - Board Certification/Specialty Certification
 - Emerging Leaders program
 - Networking
 - Evidence-based Resource Directory



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Know Your Resources

- **NBCOT**
 - Certification Renewal Information
 - Professional Development Provider Registry
 - Professional Development Log Portal
 - Sample Certificates for Fieldwork Supervision
 - Information on New Practice Area of Emphasis



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Know Your Resources

- **State Association**
 - Conferences
 - Continuing Education Classes
 - Networking
- **Employer/ Workplace**
 - Orientation and Mentoring
 - Learning from others
 - Commitment to Education
 - On-site or approved courses
- **Other**

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Practice Scholarship and Life-Long Learning

- Inservices
- Research Committees
- Exploring Community Resources
- AOTA and State Associations projects
- Clinical Ladder Programs
- AOTA Board Certifications and Specialty Certifications



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QUESTIONS?

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